



INPATIENT

Education

**For the VA Medical Centers located in
Lake City and Gainesville, Florida**

BOOKLET

UPDATED JANUARY 2007



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Welcome

Welcome to the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System. We are proud to serve those who served our country. It is our job to give you the best care we can, with kindness and respect. Our goal for you is good health. We need your help to treat your illness and keep you healthy. We want you to be satisfied so you will come back if you need our help again.

This guide will tell you things you should know as a patient at the Gainesville or Lake City Divisions of the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System. We hope it will be helpful to you.

Gainesville Division History

It was President Harry S. Truman who first approved the creation of the Veterans Administration Hospital in Gainesville on October, 1945. This plan to build the hospital, however, was cancelled that December. It was not until October, 1961,



sixteen years later, that President John F. Kennedy gave the go-ahead for building a hospital here in Gainesville.

In 1962, the VA OK'd the plan for a new hospital. The plan called for a five story, 480 bed general hospital to be located next to the University of Florida. The VA then purchased 31 acres of land. Construction began on January 16, 1964. Your VA medical center was dedicated on October 22, 1967. U.S. Representative Olin E. "Tiger" Teague, D-Texas, was the keynote speaker. He said, "the veterans of the Sunshine State can be assured they are never forgotten men."

In October, 1998, the Gainesville and Lake City VA Medical Centers joined together to form the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System. The System also includes nine associated outpatient clinics.

In February 1999 the newly constructed Ambulatory Care wing was dedicated and the medical center renamed in honor of Director Emeritus Malcom Randall.

Lake City Division History

What is now the Lake City VA Medical Center was the original site of the Florida Agricultural College (1883). In 1903, the College was renamed "The University of Florida", and in 1906, the University was relocated to Gainesville. The 335-acre site became Columbia College and remained an active institution until 1917 when it was combined with Stetson University in DeLand. During World War I, troops of the Florida Militia occupied some of the buildings. In February, 1920, the property was transferred to the citizens of Lake City. Later that same year, the site was purchased by the Federal Government for the sum of \$75,000 and plans were formed to convert the facility into a Public Health Service Hospital. After extensive renovations, the first patient was admitted on December 6, 1920, to the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital No. 63.



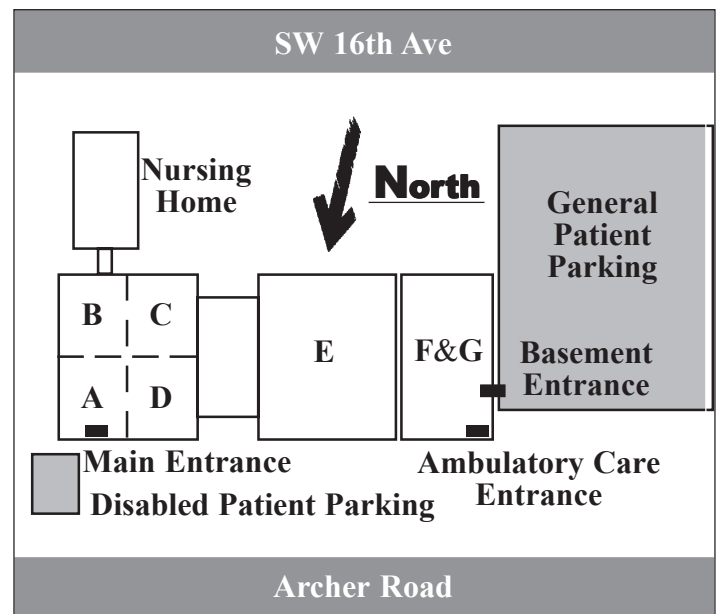
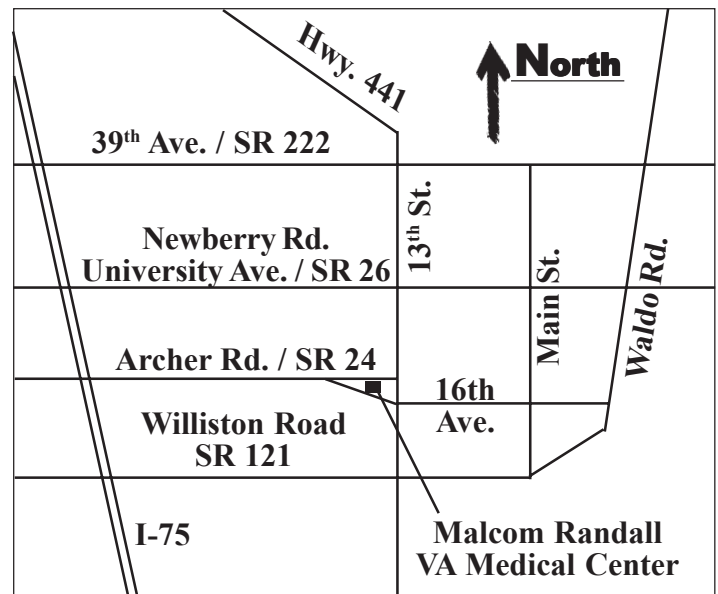
On August 9, 1921, the Veterans Bureau was created to care for returning World War I veterans, and the transition from Public Health to Veterans Bureau Hospital began. This transition was completed in 1924 when the Lake City Hospital began its proud tradition of caring for our nation's veterans. On July 21, 1930, President Hoover signed an executive order creating the Veterans Administration, and at that time the name of the hospital officially became VA Hospital, Lake City. In 1950, approximately 299 acres of the original grounds were declared surplus to federal needs, leaving the remaining 39 acres for VA functions. On September 7, 1978, the VA Hospital was officially designated a VA Medical Center.

General Information

Finding your way at the Gainesville Division

The Gainesville VA is made up of 5 floors and 7 sections- A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. A map is shown below. Room numbers and patient wards all have one of these letters. For example, room E347 would be in the E section and on the third floor.

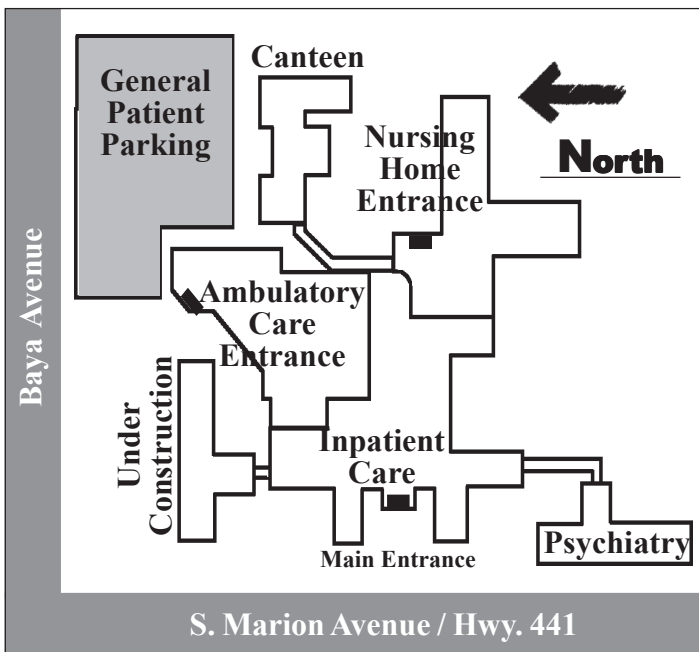
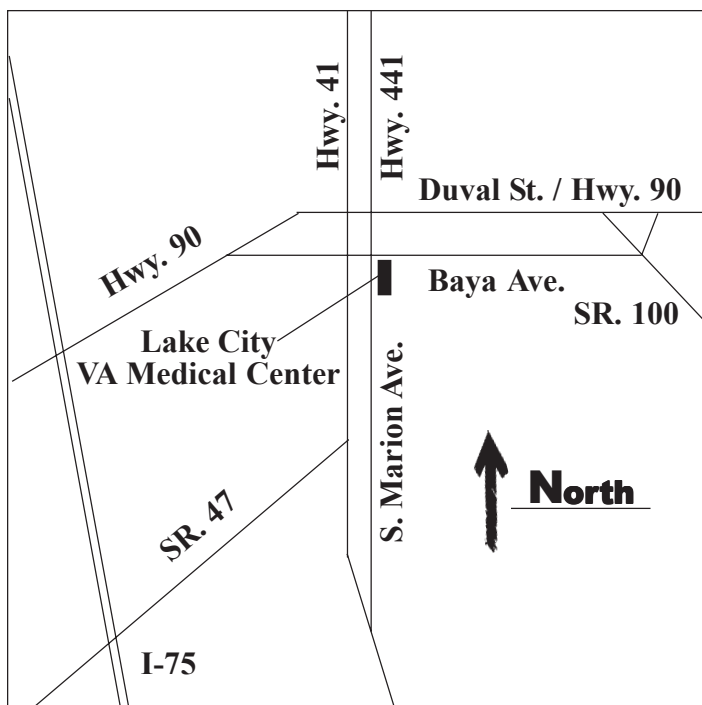
There are maps and signs on walls throughout the hospital that will point you in the right direction. If you have trouble finding your way, please ask any employee. We are here to help you and we put veterans first!



Finding your way at the Lake City Division

The Lake City Division is made up of several buildings as labeled in the map below. Ample visitor parking is provided for each of the patient care areas, and shuttle service to and from parking areas is available.

Maps and signs are posted throughout the hospital to assist you in finding your way. If you have problems, please ask any employee for assistance or pick up a red courtesy phone for assistance.



Telephone Numbers

Main Numbers (also, see "Helpful Phone Reference" on page 15)

Gainesville Division

Local: (352) 376-1611
 Long Distance: (800) 324-8387
 Pharmacy: (352) 376-1611 press 3 (or)
 (800) 324-8387 press 3 (or)
 (800) 349-9457 (Automated Order System)
 Scheduling: (352) 376-1611 press 2 (or)
 (800) 324-8387 press 2

Lake City Division

Local: (386) 755-3016
 Long Distance: (800) 308-8387
 Pharmacy: (386) 755-3016, ext. 2109 (or)
 ext. 2551 (leave a voice mail message)(or)
 (800) 308-8387, ext. 2109 (or)
 ext. 2551 (leave a voice mail message)
 Scheduling: dial the local number or the long
 distance number listed above and press 1

TelCare

The telephone advice lines listed below are available to veterans and their families. Nurses and clerks are on duty to answer questions about your health care.

Monday-Friday - 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Gainesville Division:

(352) 379-4142 or long distance: (800) 988-5641

Lake City Division:

(386) 755-3016, ext. 2805 or long distance: (800) 308-8387, ext. 2805

Evening Help:

Monday-Friday 4:00 pm to 8:00 am, and 24 hours on weekends and holidays

Entire south Georgia, Florida and Puerto Rico area:

(877) 741-3400

Addresses

Gainesville Division

Malcom Randall VA Medical Center
 1601 SW Archer Road
 Gainesville, FL 32608-1197

Lake City Division

Lake City VA Medical Center
 619 South Marion Avenue
 Lake City, FL 32025-5808

Web Address

www.va.gov or www.northflorida.va.gov/
National North Florida South Georgia Veterans Health System

Appointments and Waiting Times

We are working hard to see veterans as close to appointment times as possible.

You can help by:

- Being on time for appointments
- Calling us if you have to cancel or will be late for an appointment
- Coming early if you need to have blood tests, X-rays, EKGs or other tests done before you see the doctor
- Bringing in test results, especially if you had the tests done someplace else. Your doctor will want to see the actual X-ray, MRI, or CAT scan films.

Emergencies

If you have an emergency while you are here, please contact any staff member immediately.

Holidays

Appointments are not scheduled for the following federal holidays:

New Year's Day (1/1)
Martin Luther King Day (3rd Monday in January)
President's Day (3rd Monday in February)
Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
Independence Day (7/4)
Labor Day (first Monday in September)
Columbus Day (2nd Monday in October)
Veterans Day (11/11)
Thanksgiving (4th Thursday in November)
Christmas (12/25)

Emergency services are available at any time.

Accommodations

If you need information on local places to stay, ask to talk to a Social Worker. Social Work Service keeps a list of local hotels, motels, and homes where people can stay.

Smoking

We are a smoke free health care system. If you or your visitors must smoke, please smoke in designated areas outside the building.

Visiting Hours

Visiting hours vary from unit to unit. Check with the telephone operator or nursing station to find out the visiting hours for the area you want to visit.

Inpatient Meal Hours

Gainesville Division

Breakfast	-	6:45 am	to	7:15 am
Lunch	-	11:20 am	to	1:00 pm
Supper	-	4:45 pm	to	5:45 pm

Lake City Division

Breakfast	-	6:45 am	to	8:00 am
Lunch	-	11:20 am	to	1:00 pm
Supper	-	4:30 pm	to	6:00 pm

Coffee Shop

Java Joy, at the Gainesville Division, is locally owned and operated by a local business woman and a staff of energetic individuals dedicated to providing customers a memorable coffee experience. Java Joy is a spirited environment in which coffee connoisseurs can enjoy their beverage in style.

Hours of operation

Monday - Friday - 6:30am - 7:00pm
Saturday & Sunday - 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Closed all legal holidays

Phone: (352) 278 -0435

Located in basement next to the Canteen.

Canteen

Serving meals and snacks

Gainesville Division

Hours: Mon. thru Fri. - 7:00 am to 3:00 pm
Closed Saturday/Sunday/All legal holidays.
Location: basement of Main Building (east side)
Phone: ext. 6040

Lake City Division

Hours: Mon. thru Fri. - 7:30 am to 3:00 pm
(except Thursday) - 7:30 am to 2:00 pm
Location: first floor (near the Chapel)
Phone: ext. 2035

Retail Store

Merchandise can be charged to major credit cards.

Gainesville Division

Hours: Mon. thru Fri. - 7:30 am to 3:30 pm
Closed Saturday/Sunday/All legal holidays.
Location: next to Canteen, basement, main bldg.

Retail Store continued on next page

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Lake City Division

Hours: Mon. thru Fri. - 8:00 am to 2:00 pm
- 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Location: behind the cafeteria

Barber Shop

Lake City Division

Hours: Monday and Wednesday - 8:30 am - 4 pm
Call for an appointment on a ward.

Location: Nursing Home Care Unit 2, Room 251A
Phone: ext. 3010

Superior Optical

Gainesville Division

Hours: Mon. thru Fri. - 7:30 am to 3:30 pm
Closed Saturday/Sunday/All legal holidays.

Location: Outside the Canteen

Newspaper Stands

Gainesville Division and Lake City Divisions

Location: Outside the Canteen and other locations

Our Mission

Honor America's veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

Our Vision

To be a patient centered integrated health care organization for veterans providing excellence in health care, research, and education; an organization where people choose to work; an active community partner; and a back-up for National emergencies.

Our Core Values

**Trust ♦ Respect ♦ Excellence
Compassion ♦ Commitment**

Patient Rights and Responsibilities

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is pleased you have selected us to provide your healthcare. We want to improve your health and wellbeing. We will make your visit or stay as pleasant for you as possible. As part of our service to you, to other veterans and to the Nation, we are committed to improving healthcare quality. We also train future healthcare professionals,

conduct research, and support our country in times of national emergency. In all of these activities, our employees will respect and support your rights as a patient. Your basic rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. Please talk with VA treatment team members or a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights.

I. Respect and Nondiscrimination

- You will be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect as an individual. Your privacy will be protected. You will receive care in a safe environment. We will seek to honor your personal and religious values.
- You or someone you choose has the right to keep and spend your money. You have the right to receive an accounting of any VA held funds.
- Treatment will respect your personal freedoms. In rare cases, the use of medication and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.
- As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you may wear your own clothes. You may keep personal items. This will depend on your medical condition.
- As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you have the right to social interaction and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center.
- As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you have the right to communicate freely and privately. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to public telephones. You may participate in civic rights, such as voting and free speech.
- As a nursing home resident, you can organize and take part in resident groups in the facility. Your family also can meet with the families of other residents.
- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients or residents and staff, you are expected to respect other patients, residents and staff and to follow the facility's rules. Avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

II. Information Disclosure and Confidentiality

- You will be given information about the health benefits you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.
- You will receive information about the costs of your care, if any, before you are treated. You are responsible

for paying your portion of any costs associated with your care.

- Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless authorized by law (an example of this is State public health reporting). You have the right to information in your medical record and may request a copy of your medical records. This will be provided except in rare situations when your VA physician feels the information will be harmful to you. In that case, you have the right to have this discussed with you by your VA provider.
- You will be informed of all outcomes of care, including any potential injuries. You will be informed about how to request compensation for any injuries.

III. Participation in Treatment Decisions

- You, and any persons you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse treatment. You will be told what is likely to happen to you if you refuse treatment. Refusing treatment will not affect your rights to future care but you take responsibility for the possible results to your health.
- Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including overthecounter and herbals), and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you do not understand something about your care. Being involved is very important for you to get the best possible results.
- You will be given, in writing, the name and title of the provider in charge of your care. As our partner in healthcare, you have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You also have the right to know the names and titles of those who provide you care. This includes students, residents and trainees. Providers will properly introduce themselves when they take part in your care.
- You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient or resident. This includes your participation in decisionmaking and care at the end of life.
- If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan, you have a responsibility to notify your provider or treatment team.
- You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.
- As an inpatient or nursing home resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your

treatment plan.

- You have the right to choose whether you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.
- You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. You may consult with the Medical Center's Ethics Consultation Service and/or other staff knowledgeable about healthcare ethics.
- If you or the Medical Center believes that you have been neglected, abused or exploited, you will receive help.

IV. Complaints

- You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.

JCAHO

North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). JCAHO is an independent, not-for-profit organization that sets standards by which health care quality is measured. Their mission is to continuously improve the safety and quality of care provided to the public. Any individual may contact JCAHO to discuss quality of care or patient safety concerns by:

E-mail: Complaint@jcaho.org
Fax: Office of Quality Monitoring
(630) 792-5636
Mail: Office of Quality Monitoring
Joint Commission on Accreditation of
Healthcare Organizations
One Renaissance Boulevard
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

The Ethics Committee

Sometimes it is hard for a patient/family member to make a decision about medical care because of moral or ethical issues. Patients and/or family members may disagree with the medical team's plan of care for the patient. For example, a patient may want a certain drug but the health team does not feel that drug should be prescribed.

When these problems cannot be easily solved, the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System Ethics Committee can be consulted.

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Ethics Committee *continued from previous page*

The Ethics Committee's role is to look at ethical concerns by having the committee members talk things over with patients, family members, and the treatment team. The Ethics Committee **does not make treatment decisions**. The role of the committee is to offer assistance and guidance with ethical problems.

The Ethics Committee can be contacted through your Patient Advocate's office:

Gainesville Division

Patient Advocate - (352) 374-6019
or (800) 324-8387

Lake City Division

Patient Advocate - (386) 755-3016
or (800) 308-8387

Pain Control

When you come to the VA for an exam, your health care provider will check your five "vital signs": blood pressure, pulse, temperature, respirations, and **pain**. You have the right to have your level of pain checked and to receive treatment for pain. Treatment means relieving, controlling, and managing your pain. Your provider will ask you to rate your pain on a scale from 0 to 10:

"0" = no pain

"10" = worst pain imaginable

Your provider will also ask you the following questions about your pain:

- **Where** is it?
- **When** did it start?
- **How long** has it lasted or does it last?
- **What** makes it better or worse?
- **Which** medications have you tried? (bring your list)
- Have **treatments** worked well? Yes or no. Tell your story

There are different ways to control pain. They include:

- **Home remedies** - heat, ice, elevation, rest
- **Stretching and exercise** - physical and occupational therapies
- **Medications** - the kind prescribed depends on the type and degree of pain
- **Invasive therapies** - surgery, blocks, and injections
- **Non-invasive therapies** - massage, acupuncture, biofeedback, TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation - a device that uses electricity to block pain signals going to the brain)

Here are some safety tips to keep in mind when being treated for pain:

- Give an accurate report of your **health history** (high blood pressure, heart problems, ulcers, kidney, and liver problems, etc.)
- Report any **side effects** to drugs (allergies, reactions...)
- **Report medicines** you are now taking. This includes prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, nutritional supplements, and herbal remedies
- Take medicines **as prescribed**
- **Do not drive** if you are too drowsy from your medicine
- **When taking pain medication, check with your provider *first* to see if it's OK to drink alcohol or use other drugs that can make you drowsy.**

Use of Safety Restraints for Medical/Surgical Care

It is VA policy to use restraints only when they *have* to be used for medical purposes. Because we try all other possible solutions first, very few patients need restraints. In the event that restraints must be used for your protection, we want you and your family to be aware of information about their use.

What are safety restraints?

Safety restraints are devices used to limit motion of a part of the body, such as an arm or a hand. They are used to keep patients from injuring themselves. For example, a restraint may be used to help keep a patient from falling. A restraint might also be used to remind the patient to not move too much when getting medical therapy. Patients need to be still, for example, when getting an I.V. infusion (slowly getting medicine directly in a vein) or having a tube put in. Restraints may also be used to keep patients from pulling on bandages.

What kind of safety restraints are used?

There are many different kinds of restraints. The three types listed below are the restraints used most often in health care settings.

- **waist (or belt)** - Waist restraints are used for mildly confused patients. They are placed around the patient's waist to help keep them from falling. They also can be used when a patient is in a bed or chair.
- **jacket (or vest)** - These restraints are jackets with no sleeves. They have straps that can be tied to the bed frame under the mattress or to the legs of a chair. Jacket restraints are used for confused patients to keep them from falling out of bed or out of a chair.
- **soft wrist** - Soft wrist restraints are made of cloth and are usually used to keep an arm still. This is important, for example, when the patient slowly receives a flow of medicine in a vein (intravenous infusion), or has a

feeding tube placed in the abdomen or through the nose.

What if the patient or his or her loved ones do not want restraints to be used?

The medical staff will honor the wishes of the patient and family. This is part of the patient rights policy. In this case, the health care team records daily that the patient and family have been told there is a risk of injury without restraints, and the patient or loved ones have refused restraint use.

Do safety restraints need to be used while loved ones visit?

Safety restraints can be taken off during a loved one's visit as long as the visitor can keep the patient safe from injury.

Do safety restraints hurt?

Safety restraints should not hurt. They are usually made of soft cloth. They are snug during use, but do not slow down blood flow, cause pain, or damage skin. Even so, skin care will be given on a regular basis. To keep the restrained body parts limber, patients get range of motion exercises.

What would happen during a fire or other emergency? How would you quickly get the patient to safety?

Safety restraints are tied to the bed frame or chair using a slip knot. This allows the staff member to remove the safety restraint easily and quickly.

As mentioned, your health care team only uses restraints when everything else has been tried first. In the unlikely event your loved one needs restraints, he or she will be reassured that their use is temporary and only used to prevent injury or disruption of medical therapy. This is why they are called *safety* restraints. Your health care provider can answer other questions you may have about the use of safety restraints.

Safety

For your safety and the safety of others, please observe all VA rules. The following items and activities are not allowed on VA grounds:

- Electrical appliances, except electric razors
- Cellular phones - where warning signs exist
- Guns, bullets, and any other kind of weapon
- Alcohol and illegal drugs
- Pets, unless approved
- Gambling, loans, or business matters with other patients and staff
- Lockers and bedside tables are considered VA property and can be subject to search.

Personal Property and Valuables

Please send all valuables and cash over \$5.00 home. If you

cannot send valuables home or do not wish to do so, the Agent Cashier can hold your cash only.

Agent Cashiers

Gainesville Division

Location: New ambulatory care wing, room F-138
Phone: ext. 6784

Lake City Division

Location: Building 64, room C-134C
Phone: ext. 2014 *or* 2440

You can *only* withdraw held money Monday to Friday, 8 am to 4 pm. Withdrawals are made from the Agent Cashier.

Parking

The VA is not responsible for vehicles parked on VA property, even if stolen or damaged. If you need to park a vehicle at the VA for longer than 2 days, please ask someone to take it home or let the VA police know.

Police Service

Gainesville Division

Phone: (800) 324-8387 ext. 4091

Lake City Division

Phone: (800) 308-8387 ext. 2026

Patient Services

Chaplain Service

At both Divisions, Chaplains are available 24 hours a day for emergency calls. A staff member can contact the duty or on-call Chaplain to relay the veteran/family request for pastoral visitation. Your own clergy can visit you at any time. Chapels are located on the first floor and are always open.

Services are held as follows:

Gainesville Division

Protestant - Sunday at 10 a.m. in the Chapel
Catholic - Sundays at 4 p.m. in the Chapel

Lake City Division

Protestant - Sunday at 9:30 a.m. in the Chapel
Bible Study - Tuesdays 6:30 p.m. NHCU 4th Floor Dining Room

Care Partners

You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team and/or a CARE Partner if you have problems or complaints. Care Partners are specially trained employees located in every NF/SGVHS facility. They are here to help you.

Library Services

Here you can find books, magazines, pamphlets, and videos on a variety of health topics. You can look up health information on the Internet or read your web-based email. A collection of newspapers, magazines, and books is available for recreational reading. Library staff are eager to help you find what you need. Hours are 8 am - 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. If you are an inpatient but unable to visit the library, books and magazines can be brought to your bedside. Just give us a call at the numbers below.

Gainesville Division

Location: Library E-420 (near the Eye Clinic)
Phone: ext. 6313 or 6314
Hours: 8 am - 4:30 pm

Lake City Division

Location: B-120C (near Canteen)
Phone: ext. 2232 or 2234
Hours: 8 am - 4:30 pm

Pharmacy Services

If you are an inpatient:

Please leave all your medicines at home or have a friend or family member take them home. Filled prescriptions are *not allowed* on *inpatient* wards. A *list* of your medicines will help your health care provider. Nurses will give you the medicines your doctor orders.

If you are an outpatient:

Please bring all your medicines, including over the counter medicines, with you. Your health care provider will want to know what you are taking.



Television

The Gainesville and Lake City Divisions of the North Florida/South Georgia System offer a variety of TV programs.

Patient education programs:

We hope you will tune to channel 21 at the Gainesville Division and channel 17 at the Lake City Division. These channels are here just for you. They offer programs you may find helpful as a veteran patient. A staff member may ask you to watch a program on one of these channels. The program may help you understand your illness and how to take care of yourself when you leave. We also hope you will watch programs on your own.

Reducing stress through relaxation:

Lake City Division

Tune to channel 22 for movies selected especially for our veteran patients. If you have a special request for a movie, call extension 2695.

Veterans' Help Line:

At the Gainesville Division, channel 21 lists services you may want to use to get special help. The list includes people to call for help with veterans benefits, diabetes, women's health, and other areas. These lists show up when programs are not being shown.

Recreation activities:

It's no fun being ill. Our recreation staff can make things a little easier by keeping you busy and interested. Tune to channel 21 for an up-to-date list of things to do at the Gainesville Division such as bingo, movies, crafts you can do in your room, and other programs. Auditorium activities are broadcast on channel 20 at the Lake City Division.

Chapel services:

Many patients would like to go to church services but cannot because of health problems. So, we bring services to you on TV channel 21 at the Gainesville Division and on channel 19 at the Lake City Division!

Gainesville Division

Protestant - Sunday at 10 a.m.
Catholic - Sundays at 4 p.m.

Lake City Division

Protestant - Sunday at 9:30 a.m.
Bible Study - Tuesdays 6:30 p.m.

Entertainment channels:

Gainesville Division

In addition to Channel 21, there are other TV channels to enjoy:

2 TBS	22 Discovery Health
3 ABC (Gainesville)	23 Family Channel
4 Lifetime	24 Weather
7 ESPN	25 Sci-Fi
8 WGN (Chicago)	26 Country Music
9 TLC	27 Travel
10 CNN	29 SPIKE
11 PBS (Gainesville)	30 BET
12 NBC (Jacksonville)	31 CBS Gainesville
13 FOX (Ocala)	32 History
14 TNT	33 Animal Planet
15 A&E	34 Game Channel
16 USA	35 House & Garden
17 Discovery	36 Sunshine Network
18 AMC	37 Comedy Central
21 VET	

Lake City Division

In addition to the two education channels there are other TV channels to enjoy:

2 Sneak Preview	22 Patient in-room
3 ABC (Gainesville)	Movies
4 CBS (Jacksonville)	23 HSN
5 PBS (Gainesville)	24 CNN
6 Community	25 TNT
Bulletin Board	26 Nickelodeon
7 UPN (Jacksonville)	27 MTV
8 LCCC (Lake City)	28 SPIKE
9 Warner Bros. (Jax)	29 A&E
10 FOX (Jacksonville)	30 FOX
11 Weather Channel	31 Disney
12 NBC (Jacksonville)	32 Lifetime
13 QVC	33 USA Network
14 C-Span	34 BET
15 TV Guide Channel	35 Discovery
16 WGN	36 AMC
17 Patient Education	37 Sunshine
19 Chapel Services	38 ESPN
20 Auditorium	39 TBS
Activities	40 Headline News

Recreation Therapy Section

Fun and creative things to do can help you heal faster and let you meet other veterans. Recreation Therapy programs include bingo, crafts, socials, and movies.

A schedule of daily activities is on the bulletin board on each ward. If you want more information, either call or visit Recreation Therapy Services.

Gainesville Division

Location: Bldg. 1, basement (across from Canteen)

Phone: ext. 6535

Lake City Division

Location: First floor next to the auditorium

Phone: ext. 2695

Women Veterans' Clinic

The Women Veterans' Clinic is available to assist female veterans to get special care.

Gainesville Division

Clinic ext. 7474

Appointments ext. 6173

Lake City Division

Clinic and Appointments ext. 3116 or 3740

Clinic Coordinator ext. 3740

Social Work Service

Social workers are here to help you with:

- Counseling (including money matters) and crisis intervention
- Patient education
- Getting services outside the hospital for health and social needs
- Talking to your doctor or nurse about your health, treatment or case management.

Social Work Service manages the largest contract nursing home programs in the nation and one of the most active Hoptel programs in the VA system. Additionally, the service coordinates the contracted Adult Day Health Care Program and provides liaison services between the VA and the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs' Domiciliary in Lake City and Nursing Home in Daytona Beach.

Active affiliations with Florida State University and Florida A&M University social work programs provide an excellent opportunity for VA staff to work with some of the finest graduate students in the profession.

For questions or comments please call: Gainesville ext. 6367 or Lake City ext. 2578

Nutrition Service

We have a group of nutrition experts who will be glad to answer your nutrition questions. Our Service offers various outpatient nutrition classes to give you the tools for self-care and improved health in hypertension, weight control/BMI (body mass index), diabetes, substance abuse, cardiac rehab, smoking cessation, and hepatitis. We also offer individualized nutrition counseling; just tell your provider you need to speak to a dietitian.

Vocational Rehabilitation

If you need help getting a job, ask your health care provider to refer you to Psychology Service for vocational rehabilitation counseling.

Smoking Cessation

If you use tobacco and would like to quit, ask your health care provider to refer you to the Stop Smoking Program. The program will help you break the habit.

Substance Abuse

We have a program to help you if you use alcohol and/or other addictive drugs and would like to stop using them. For more information, call the Substance Abuse Treatment Teams at their local numbers:

Gainesville Division

Phone: (352) 374-6089 or
(800) 324-8387, ext. 6089

Lake City Division

Phone: (386) 755-3016 ext. 2618 or
(800) 308-8387, ext. 2618

Tallahassee Outpatient Clinic

Phone: (850) 878-0191, ext. 2152 or
(800) 541-8387

Jacksonville Outpatient Clinic

Phone: (904) 232-2751

Daytona Beach Outpatient Clinic

Phone: (386) 323-7500 ext. 30085
(800) 953-6838

VA Voluntary Service (VAVS)

Volunteers help patients and staff in many ways. You can volunteer at this hospital, at one of the outpatient clinics, or even in a veteran's home. If you want to become a volunteer, call ext. 6068 at the Gainesville Division or ext. 2135 at our Lake City Division.

Florida Department of Veterans Affairs

The representatives of the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs assist in filing for VA benefits. Office hours are 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, Monday-Friday.

Gainesville Division

Location: Room D-162, 1st floor ("flag pole" entrance)
Phone: ext. 6029

Lake City Division

Location: Room A-163, 1st floor
Phone: ext. 2070

Disabled American Veterans

The D.A.V. service officer is available weekdays from 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Gainesville Division

Location: D164-A, 1st floor
Phone: ext. 4148/6436

Lake City Division

Location: Building 38 Room 215
Phone: ext. 2649

Home Care Programs

The goal of VA home care programs is to help patients who have a long term illness, are terminally ill, or very disabled, remain in their homes and avoid hospitalization. To do this, we provide a range of support services in the home on a short or long term basis, based on the each veteran's need.

Home Based Primary Care (HBPC)

Are you:

- Homebound?
- Unable to come to VA clinics because of physical disability?

HBPC staff teach veterans and their caregivers how to take care of themselves. We provide medication, supplies, equipment, and advice to make the care as easy as possible.

A VA nurse practitioner, social worker, rehabilitation therapist, and dietitian visit your home so that you don't have to come to the VA clinics for primary care.

Intermittent Skilled Care

This care is usually short-term home care by RN's, rehabilitation therapists, and social workers. New problems are addressed, such as wound care after a surgery or rehab after a stroke. The care is provided by a home health agency in your community. Our office coordinates this care. You may choose your home health agency by letting your VA provider or our office know your preference.

Home Health Aide Program

This is a program for veterans who need personal care such as help with bathing or hygiene. The care is provided by a home health agency in your community.

Hospice

This is an in-home health care program for veterans who are terminally ill, and unlikely to live more than 6 months. Care is provided by a hospice agency in your community, coordinated with VA care through our office.

How long do home care services last?

Length of home care services depend on how well the patient is doing. A decision to stop home care is made by the home care staff, VA providers, and the patient.

What is my cost for home care?

Our services are without cost to most veterans. Only Priority eight veterans may be billed for Home Based Primary Care visits. Skilled care or hospice services may be paid for by your Medicare or private insurance, but you will not be billed.

How to reach Home Care

Home Based Primary Care

Phone: 352-374-6005 or
1-800-324-8387 ext 6005

Intermittent Skilled Care

Phone: 1-800-324-8387 ext 6021

Home Health Aide Program

Phone: 1-800-308-8387 ext 2046

Hospice

Phone: 1-800-324-8387 ext 6021

Money Matters

Insurance and VA Billing

As a veteran served by the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System, you may wonder why you are asked for private insurance information. This section provides answers to questions often asked about insurance and the VA.

Why does the VA want my insurance information?

Congress has passed a law telling us we have to bill for non-service connected treatment. If we don't bill your insurance carrier, we are actually breaking the law. There is never a charge for treating service-connected conditions.

What if I am covered by my wife's insurance?

We have to file whether the insurance is under your name, your wife's, or your guardian's.

It makes me a bit uneasy giving you my insurance information. If you file a claim, how will it affect my insurance?

It won't affect your insurance *at all*. What you pay for insurance won't change. Your coverage won't change. Your insurance company expects to be charged for health care that you receive.

Will I somehow be charged for this billing?

No. This will *not* cost you anything.

How will filing a claim affect my eligibility?

Your eligibility for VA medical care *will not* be affected at all.

When will I be asked for this information?

When you come for treatment. We may also give you a call at home.

What information do I need to bring with me?

Most of the information we need is right on your insurance card. We will make a copy of your card each time you receive care at the VA. Also, please let us know if you have a new address or phone number.

You file a claim for me and my insurance company pays the VA. Where does that money go?

This is important. All money collected goes right to your local health care system. It is a vital part of the entire operation. For example, the money is used to help set up more clinics, buy new equipment, and hire more staff to take care of your needs. Last year your North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System began caring for more than 10,000 new patients, so this money is certainly needed.

Doesn't Congress give the VA all the money it needs to operate?

Yes, this is true for service-connected veterans. Congress expects VA to also get money from health insurance and co-payments. That's one reason they passed the law that requires the VA to collect insurance money for non-service related conditions. This money is part of the VA budget. We thank you for your help with filing these claims. You deserve the best care available, and this money is vital to providing that care.

If I have more questions, what should I do?

You may ask any VA clerk, or call the Business Office at (800) 324-8387, ext. 4046. If you have Internet access, you may visit the VHA Revenue Office site at <http://www.va.gov/mccr>

Copayments and VA Billing

The following questions, and answers address key topics about VA copayments and billing.

What are co-payments?

A co-payment is a type of cost sharing where you pay a set amount for a service that is provided to you.

Why does the VA charge co-payments?

Congress passed a law telling us we have to charge co-payments.

Billing continued on next page

Billing continued from previous page

What types of co-payments does the VA charge?

- **The Means Test Co-payment** is for inpatient and outpatient treatment. The amount of the co-payment changes each year.
- **The Extended Care Co-payment** is a daily charge for extended care services.
- **The Facility Co-payment** is a daily charge for hospital care and nursing home care.
- **The Medication Co-payment** is a charge for each medication ordered for non-service connected conditions.

How do I pay my co-payment?

You are encouraged to pay all of your co-payments before you leave the facility. You may pay at the Agent Cashier Window.

- If you don't pay before you leave, you will be mailed a statement about your co-payment balance.
- You mail your co-payment to a Centralized Processing Unit in Atlanta, GA.

What if I can't pay co-payment charges?

Working with a business office employee, you may develop a repayment plan to pay a set amount each month towards your co-payments. A waiver request based on special circumstances such as job loss may qualify you for a one time cancellation of debt.

Congress passed a law that says if a veteran owes more than \$25.00 and the debt is over 120 days the VA must report this to the U.S. Treasury Department and the Debt Management Center. These offices are responsible for collecting co-payment debts from federal income tax refund checks, federal retirement pay, social security, and disability payments.

Where does the money go from my co-payments?

All co-payments collected go right to your local health care system. It is a vital part of the entire operation. For example, the money is used to buy more equipment, set up new clinics and hire staff to take care of your needs. Last year the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System began caring for more than 10,000 new patients.

What if I have more questions?

You may ask any VA clerk, call the Business Office at (888) 489-3645, or call the Business Office at (800) 324-8387, ext.4046 or (352) 376-1611 ext.4046.

If you have Internet access, you may visit the VHA Revenue Office site at: <http://www.va.gov/cbo/>

Release of Information

Veterans interested in obtaining copies of their medical records should visit the Release of Information office - room EB54-1 in Gainesville (extension 6046) and room CB9 in Lake City (extension 2504). You can also ask that copies of your record be sent to third parties such as family members. Your request should always include:

- Your signature
- The date of your request
- Specific information you would like to receive (dates of treatment, type of document)
- Date of expiration; and to whom the information is to be released.

If you would like copies of your records located at other VA facilities, please request them from that facility.

All patients are entitled to one free copy of their medical record. After the free copy, a \$.15 charge applies to every page after the first 100 pages one-sided pages.

Patients have the right to request a change to their medical record if there is disagreement with information in the record. The patient must request this in writing, identifying the information that is believed to be wrong, and why it should be corrected.

Suggestions

If you have any suggestions for helping us improve this publication, please call (352) 376-1611 or 1-800-324-8387, extension 6378 or email ed.swanson@va.gov.

Please Consider Volunteering

BENEFITS

Awards / CPR Certification / Flu Vaccine and more

REWARDS

Make New Friends / Learn New Skills / Sense of Accomplishment

OPPORTUNITIES

Available in numerous services as well as VA outpatient clinics in Jacksonville, Daytona, Ocala, Tallahassee, Vadosa, St. Augustine, Leesburg, Inverness, and The Villages

Contribute to our very important mission of providing compassionate, quality care for our nation's veterans!

Voluntary Service in the Department of Veterans Affairs

Gainesville Division
1601 SW Archer Road
Gainesville, FL 32608
352-374-6068
800-324-8387 ext. 6068

Lake City Division
619 S. Marion Avenue
Lake City, FL 32025
386-755-3016 ext. 2135
800-308-8387 ext. 2135

Make a World of Difference

Advance Directives

What is an Advance Directive?

An Advance Directive is a legal form you fill out and sign that lets us know your health care wishes when you cannot speak for yourself. It's your right to accept or refuse medical care when you are very ill. When you are very ill we need to know what you have decided about such things as:

- Being brought back to life if your heart or breathing stops
- Having a machine breathe for you
- Being fed through a tube if you can't eat
- Getting blood transfusions, antibiotics, fluids through your veins, or getting other medicines

What are examples of Advance Directives?

There are two types of Advance Directives:

The **Living Will** spells out in writing your wishes for your health care should you become very ill and unable to speak for yourself.

The **Designation of Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care** lets you name a person to make decisions for you, if you become unable to do so yourself.

Consider an Advance Directive in your health care planning.

- Know your rights
- Plan ahead
- Fill out and go over your Advance Directive carefully
- Talk about your wishes with your family and doctor
- Express your wishes clearly

If you need help in making out an Advance Directive or would like to know more, ask one of the health care team members

for their help. He or she can talk about Advance Directives with you and help you fill out the forms.

It's also good to carry a notice with you at all times letting people know you have filed an Advance Directive. Fill out the small form below and keep this form in your wallet or purse.

Helpful Phone Reference

Gainesville Division

Local	(352) 376-1611
Long Distance (800) 324-8387	
Telcare	4142
Pharmacy	6105
Scheduling	6173
Doctor Assignment	7332
Billing	4046
Women's Clinic	7474
Release of Information ...	6046
Patient Travel	4078
Patient Advocate	6019
Optical Dispensary	2020
Elegibility	6816/6726
Eye Clinic	6214/5215
ENT/Plastic Clinic	4072
Derm/Rheum Office	7495

Lake City Division

Local	(386) 755-3016
Long Distance (800) 308-8387	
Telcare	3400
Scheduling	2465
Doctor Assignment	2893
Means Test	3270
Women's Clinic	2417
Release of Information ...	2504
Patient Travel	2061
Patient Advocate	2952
Eye Clinic	2248
Eligibility	2059
Billing/Co-Pay	2500
Phone Advice (Telecare) ..	2805
Credit Union	2596

Outpatient Clinics & Community Based Outpatient Clinics

Daytona Beach OPC	800-953-6838 / 386-323-7500
Lecanto CBOC	352-746-8000
Jacksonville OPC	877-870-5048 / 904-232-2751
Leesburg CBOC	352-435-4000
Ocala CBOC	352-369-3320
St. Augustine CBOC	904-829-0814
Tallahassee OPC	800-541-8387 / 850-878-0191
The Villages CBOC	352-205-8900
Valdosta CBOC	229-293-0132

ADVANCED DIRECTIVES NOTICE TO HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

I, _____, have executed a

() Living Will

() Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care and have given a copy of such document(s) to:

Name: _____ Phone: () _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: () _____

Address: _____

YOUR NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE () _____

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Patient **SAFETY** – *A Team Effort*

It is the goal of the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System to provide you, the deserving veteran, with the highest quality of health care available anywhere. In delivering this care, we make safety a priority. The Department of Veterans Affairs takes pride in being a world leader in the area of patient safety practices. However, medical errors can still happen in *any* health care setting. You, the patient, play a vital role in the care you receive. Think of yourself as being the most important member of your health care team. Ask questions – it's your body and you have a right to know. Don't assume anything.

Be Alert

- If you are issued a wristband for identification, make sure the information on the band is correct.
- Carry your VIC (Veterans Universal Access and Identification Card) with you at all times.
- Before having a procedure done or getting medication, your caregiver should confirm your name or check your wristband first. If they don't, say something.
- Your providers should wash their hands before delivering care (if they don't - remind them).
- If headed to surgery, was the part of your body to be operated on clearly marked?
- When you have prescriptions filled, always make sure you were issued the right medicine.
- Make sure you are actually receiving treatments that you are supposed to be getting.

Be Involved

- Be directly involved with your care. You need to be part of the decision-making process.
- Do you agree with your plan of care? If not, discuss this with your health care team.
- If you have any concerns about your care, speak up!
- If an employee is not able to assist you with a concern, ask to talk to their immediate supervisor.
- Make sure you report any changes in your health.

Be Informed

- Do you have any questions about your care? If so, get answers.
- Do you have a family member or friend you trust available to assist you during your stay? If so, perhaps that person can:
 - help with questions that need to be asked
 - help you remember what has been explained to you
 - assist you with filling out forms
 - help keep an eye on things during your care
 - help you after you leave the hospital (they will be more familiar with your needs, too)
- Learn as much as you can about your condition and treatment. Ask questions and take notes. Ask for patient education materials. Use libraries (Lake City and Gainesville Divisions have Patient Libraries). Check web sites on the subject. Consider joining a support group if one is available for your situation.
- Understand medical forms before you sign them.
- When scheduled for a test, know exactly what the test is for and how to prepare for it. Ask when you can expect the results of the test. Make sure you understand the results when you get them.
- Do you know what medications you take? What they are for? How and when you should take them? Do you know about their possible side effects? How to have prescriptions refilled?
- Make sure you understand your home care plan before you leave the hospital.